The
UNITARIAN MONTHLY

No. 188. (Vol. XVI—5). MAY, 1919. ONE PENNY

What a Unitarian Thinks about Religion.

[The following selection is by Oliver Wendell Holmes, the genial "Autocrat..' b, Aug. 29th, 1809, d. Oct. 7th, 1894, Professor of Anatomy and Physiology, was one of the best known and widely read of American writers, and in Religion an earnest Unitarian, and a member of a Unitarian Church in Boston, U.S.A.]

RELIGION is not a matter of intellectual luxury to those of us who are interested in it, but something very different. It is our life, and more than our life; for that is measured by pulse-beats, but our religious consciousness partakes of the Infinite, towards which it is constantly yearning. It is very possible that a hundred or five hundred years from now the FORMS of religious belief may be so altered that we should hardly know them. But the sense of dependence on Divine influence and the need of communion with the unseen and eternal will be then just what they are now. . . . . We all want religion sooner or later. I am afraid there are some who have no natural turn for it, as there are persons without an ear for music . . . , but sorrow and misery bring even these to know what it means.

From "The Poet at the Breakfast Table, 1873."

M.B.

Florence Nightingale Convalescent Home for Men.

NATIONAL MEMORIAL.

Send to the Hon. Secretary a postcard asking for a War Loan Savings Card. You can then LEND fifteen shillings and sixpence to the Government and GIVE One Pound to the Florence Nightingale Convalescent Home for ex-Soldiers. All you have to do is to buy one or more sixpenny War Loan Savings Stamps at your Local Post Office, just when you are able to do so. You then fix the stamps on the card, and when all the thirty-one spaces are filled return it to the Hon. Secretary. The card will be exchanged by the secretary for a War Loan Certificate and this will be entered in your name by the treasurer as a donation of £1 to the Convalescent Home. The Treasurer will hold the certificate for five years during which time the Government will have the use of your money, and then, with interest added, it will be worth the one pound with which you will have been credited.

This is the easiest way possible of rendering a double service, a service to the country and a service to the Convalescent Home. The purchase of an occasional sixpenny stamp will not be felt by any one, and if every reader of the UNITARIAN MONTHLY will follow this plan a large sum will be raised for the Convalescent Home.

The Convalescent Home is for the men and lads of our own congregations and Sunday Schools. It is now established in temporary premises at Great Hucklow, and a number of ex-soldiers have already been received as guests. The charge for ex-soldiers is ten shillings and sixpence per week, and one shilling each way for conveyance between the station and the Home.

It is earnestly desired to commence the erection of the permanent premises early next year. This, however, depends on the response to the appeal. The sum asked for is £10,000, of which not less than £5,000 will be invested as endowment. Something over £4,000 has been subscribed up to the present. Will you help to make up the balance?

Secretaries of Congregations, Sunday Schools, Elder Classes, Social Unions, and others are invited to act as Local Treasurers. A number of cards would be sent to them which they would endeavour to get taken up. Will you help? It is not a great service compared with that of the men on whose behalf the Convalescent Home is to be provided.

CHARLES PEACH,

Hon. Secretary,

GREAT HUCKLOW, BUXTON.

Destiny.

We are what we imagine, and our deeds
Are born of dreaming. Europe acts to-day
Epics that little children in their play
Conjured, and statesmen murmured in their creeds;
In barrack, court, and school were sown those seeds,
Like Dragon's teeth, which ripen to affray
Their sowers. Dreams of slaughter rise to slay,
And fate itself is stuff that fancy breeds.

Mock, then, no more at dreaming, lest our own
Create for us a like reality!
Let not imagination's soil be sown
With armed men but justice, so that we
May for a world of tyranny atone
And dream from that despair—democracy.

—Selected.

Notes and News.

The Annual Meetings of the Manchester District Association of Unitarian Churches were held in Manchester, Mar. 22nd, when it was reported that good progress is made at Pendleton, Mill Street, Oldham Road, Longsight, and Urmston, and that Upper Brook Street Church remains closed; the London Unitarian Society held a very successful united service of churches at Mansford Street, Bethnal Green, March 22nd followed by tea and public meeting, and Mr. Ronald P. Jones, M.A., said there is a danger of underestimating the differences between Unitarianism and "Orthodoxy"; A sale of work at Accrington realised £155; Lance-Corporal James Collins, of Dundee Unitarian Church has been presented with the Albert Gold Medal for saving life on the battlefield; the Hastings Unitarian Church has received a good tonic in a sermon by a Church of England Vicar denouncing Unitarianism, "Be Agnostics, but not Unitarians," he said, so the Unitarians are replying in pulpit and press and commanding attention, increased sympathy and support; the Mountpottinger Church has increased its minister's salary £20; the Annual Meeting of the E. Cheshire Christian Union of Unitarian Churches was held at Macclesfield, Mar. 29th, at which a motion in support of the League of Nations was adopted; the Blackburn Unitarian Church has entered into its new premises, dedicated and opened, Mar. 29th; the Lewisham Unitarian Church has made a special extra grant of £25 to its minister, Rev. A. H. Dolphin; a Sale of Work at Longsight, Manchester, realised £110; a Bazaar by the Oldham Unitarian Church raised £1,000; the American Unitarian Association has appointed Rev. Minot Simons, of Cleveland as organiser of a Forward Movement for Unitarianism in the United States, and the British and Foreign Unitarian Association is considering a similar appointment for this country; Mr. T. Fielding Johnson, of Leicester, has secured a noble site of 37 acres on which to build two schools for boys and girls as well as a local University College for presentation to the town, and Mr. G. A. Royce has given £500 to the University College Fund,—both gentlemen are members of the Great Meeting Unitarian congregation; Dr. L. P. Jacks will be the Anniversary preacher for the British and Foreign Unitarian Association next Whit-week for the second time; the Ministerial Fellowship is promoting a scheme for the establishment of a Rest House for ministers; a second Unitarian Church has been opened in Japan; a new Unitarian movement has sprung up at Lagos, West Africa, as the result of literature sent from Essex Hall; the speakers at the Public Meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association at Essex Hall, London, in Whit-week will be Dr. Mellone, Mr. W. R. Barclay, Rev. Lawrence Redfern, and Miss Dorothy Tarrant, M.A., on "Practical Applications of our Unitarian Faith"; the old chapel belonging to the Unitarians at Gainsborough, has been acquired for the extension of engineering works and a new chapel will be erected on a more suitable site

MINISTERIAL CHANGES: Rev. H. Fisher Short has had farewell presentation at Park Lane, Wigan, and commenced his ministry at Bootle; Rev. Leonard Short has been invited to succeed his brother at Park Lane, but has decided to remain at Coventry; Rev. John Dale, aged 84, has preached his farewell sermon at Selby; Rev. B. C. Constable terminates his ministry at South Shore, Blackpool at the end of June; Rev. H. Fisher Short has received public welcome to the Bootle Church; Rev. C. A. Ginever has concluded his ministry at the Dover Unitarian Church, and received farewell presentation of a gold watch, and the Rev. John Yeomans, his successor, commenc- his ministry there on April 13th; Rev. Edward Parry has settled as minister at Tavistock;

DEATHS: Miss Megan Davies, Aberdare, March 25th, 29; Mr. J. W. Randell, London March 24th, 72; Miss A. A. Vance Smith, Highgate, London, March 21st, 74; Miss Angela Stead, Birkdale, March 17th; Rev. W. Jenkins Davies, Charing Cross Hospital, March 28th, 61; Mrs. Eastlake, Bolton, wife of Rev. W. H. Eastlake, March 30th, 79; Miss A. A. Peyton, at Winchester, formerly of Birmingham, March 30th, 84; Mrs. Maskell Hardy, London, March 28th, 57; Mr. Alderman W. Moss, J.P., Loughborough, Apri 1st, 80; Mr. Geo. Courtauld, M.A., Gosfield, Essex, April 2nd, 60; Miss J. A. Potter, Fallowfield, Manchester, April 7th; Miss Anna S. Ridge, Tunbridge Wells, April 5th, 76; Mr. William Gair Rathbone, London, April 9th, 69; Rev. John McDowell, Pendleton, Manchester, April 9th, 70; Mrs. J. Teal, Halifax, April 5th; Mrs. Alfred S. Dale, of Walthamstow, at University College Hospital, London, April 4th, 55; Miss Clara C. Lucas, Darlington, April 4th, 65; Mrs. Joseph Kirk, Stalybridge, April 9th, 92;

Mr. GEORGE SMITH.

Mr. GEORGE SMITH was for many years the head-master of the Lower Mosley Street Day Schools, and superintendent of the Sunday School and his name and fame were very familiar to Unitarians in Manchester and district. He initiated week evening classes in connection with the Sunday School which became so popular in Manchester that with a widening curriculum, including nearly everything in languages, commerce, science, and art, ultimately attracted no less than a thousand students.

The Order Comes.

The order comes: "To March!"
And I step forth to go,
Though where my foot may fall,
I do not know.

This halt has been so sweet,
That lingering here,
The ground beneath my feet
Seems "home," and dear.

The next move I must make
Will leave me—where?
He knows, who gave command,
I have no care.

"Forward!" I hear His voice,
I know He speaks to me,
I make His will my choice—
So let it be. —Churchman.

MAY.

By Rev. WILLIAM C. HALL, M.A.

The derivation of the word May as the name of the month, like that of April, is doubtful. Some think it originated in honour of Maia, most beautiful of Pleiades, and mother of Mercury; but why she may have been singled out for the distinction is not clear to see. Others think that the month was named after the Majores or Maiores, the elders, the senators of the early Roman constitution. We incline to the latter opinion, simply because of two theories it seems the less improbable.

Our Saxon forefathers called the month Tri-Milchi. It was the month in which their cows, under the benefit of spring herbage, began to give milk three times a day.

It is the month of new grass, and generally of the marked increase of vegetation. It is the month of springing flowers and of the nightingale's song as she awaits the coming of his mate. We think particularly of its flowers, and of the festival connected with them, of the May-pole, and of the crowning of the May Queen. This latter festival, once generally observed, but now unfortunately kept with due ritual and ceremony only in a few places, might well be revived: for we need, amid our commercialism, customs that bring us to do homage to the beautiful of our kind when nature put on her fresh apparel. To our forefathers the festival had the appeal of beautiful natural and pagan things; among the Romans it had a religious significance as well, for on May 1st they formally worshipped the goddess Flora. If we could identify Flora with Maia we should probably have the name of the month explained, happily.

It is the month of increase. Shall we suppose in the fact that we have an explanation of various denominational meetings in May: that good religious people gather not for talk that matters not but for the interchange of ideas that effect the growth of congregations and the enlargement of what I wish we could bring ourselves to call "our Church?"

Well, May hawthorn will soon be on the hedges, as red as life and as white as holiness, and I must be thinking soon of sauntering down an English lane.

The evening congregations at Great Meeting Chapel, Leicester, increased 50 p.c. under Rev. Dr. Rattray during 1918; the Good Friday meetings of the Manchester District S.S. Association were a great success this year; the Stockport Free Church Ministers' Association nominated the Unitarian Rev. H. E. Perry, to be Poor Law Chaplain, and the Guardians have appointed him.

Which is Good News.

IN "John Ward, Preacher," by Margaret Deland, the following incident is described:

There was a fire, the lumber yards near the river were all ablaze.

It was said that a boy Charley, had been in the lumber yard, that he was still there, and would be burnt to death. The mother of the boy shrieked and ran up and down like a mad woman.

Tom Davis, half drunken, heard the mother's cries, which roused all the manhood drink had left in him, and he rushed into the smoke and fire for Charley. But Charley was found outside, safe and restored to his mother, and at last, as if from the very mouth of hell, Tom Davis came, staggering, and swaying, hands stretched blindly out, and fell forward on his face—dead.

John Ward, preacher, an extreme Calvinist, but a most kind-hearted man, went to see Mrs. Davis to express sympathy and consolation.

"You don't think he's lost? Say you don't, preacher—say you don't."

"Remember, God knows what is best for His children," John said. "He sends this grief of Tom's death to you in His infinite wisdom. He loves you—He knows best. God knows what you need. He sends sorrow to draw our souls nearer to Him."

"Oh," she exclaimed, her voice broken and hoarse "I don't want no good for me if Tom has to die for it. An' why should He love me instead o' Tom? Oh, I don't want His love as wouldn't give Tom another chance. Oh, preacher, you ain't going to say you think my Tom's burning in hell, this night, and me living to be made better by it. Oh, no, no, no! say he isn't." And she crawled to his feet and clasped his knees with her shaking arms.

But the preacher could only soothe her.

Next day, Helen, the preacher's wife, a freethinker, packed up a basket of food and took it to Mrs. Davis. On the way she met Elder Dean, and heard him say that he had seen Mrs. Davis. "Yes, I saw her" said he,—"I went to administer consolation. It is an awful judgment on that man; no chance for repentance, overtook by hell, as I told Mrs. Davis, in a moment! But the Lord must be praised for His justice: that ought to comfort her."

"Good heavens!" cried Helen, "you did not tell that poor woman her husband was overtaken by hell?"

"Ma'am," said Mr. Dean, fairly stuttering—"I —I—did."

"Oh, shame!" Helen said. "How dared you do such a thing? How dared you libel the goodness of God? Tom Davis is not in hell. A man who died to save another's life? How could you have the heart to make her think God was so cruel?"

Helen hurried away. The Elder, as soon as he recovered from her words, exclaimed: "May the Lord forgive her! Tom Davis not in hell? Why where's the good of hell at all, then?"

Helen, burning with sympathy, reached Mrs. Davis, stroked the woman's hand gently, and said: "Mrs. Davis, I'm so sorry."

It was a simple thing, but different from the sympathy she had been listening to. A big tear rolled down Mrs. Davis's face. Then she spoke:

"Elder Dean 'lows I oughtn't to be sorry; he says I ought to be resigned to God's justice. He says good folks ought to be glad when sinners go to the bad place, even if they're belonging to them. I'm not sayin' that he ain't right. I'm not sayin' Tom ain't in the bad place, ner that it ain't justice. Tom—he wasn't no Christian; he didn't ever experience a change of heart, an' I'm not sayin' he isn't lost. I'm only sayin'—this with a sudden passion—"I'm only sayin' I can't love God no more! Him havin' all the power—and then look at Tom an' me—."

"Oh, Mrs. Davis," cried Helen, "of course you could not love a God who would never give Tom another chance, and then punish him; of course you could not love him! But he is not punished by being sent to hell; indeed, indeed he is not. If God is good, He could not be so cruel as to give a soul no chance and then send it to hell. Don't ever think that Tom, brave fellow, is there."

Mrs. Davis, stupefied, said in a hoarse, hurried whisper: "You don't think—you're not sayin'—Tom isn't in hell?"

"I know he is not! Justice? It would be the most frightful injustice. I don't know anything about people's souls when they die—I mean about going to heaven—but I do know this: as long as a soul lives it has a chance for goodness, a chance to turn to God. There is no such place as hell."

The rigid look on the woman's face began to disappear; her hopeless belief was shaken.

"Oh!" she said, appealingly, "are you true with me, ma'am?"

"I am true, indeed I am!" Helen answered, her tears falling on Mrs. Davis's hands.

'If you're true, if you're right, then I can be sorry. I wouldn't let myself be sorry while I couldn't have no hope. Oh, I can be that sorry it turns me glad."

The hardness was all gone now; she broke into a storm of tears, saying between her sobs: "Oh, I'm so glad, I'm so glad!"

To Men and Women on War Service.

Motto—FOR GOD AND HUMANITY.

DEAR FRIENDS,—You are not all demobilised. Many of you are still required in the army until Peace is finally settled and something like order restored. To be away from home and kindred and friends is not good as a permanent condition, but as necessity makes it imperative under certain circumstances, it is wise to bear it patiently and to make the best of it. Yes "the best of it," by which I mean, to stand this test of endurance so that you will not let it depress your spirits nor lower your standard of conduct.

There are some men and some women to whom it is a good thing to be separated from home for a time. They are thereby thrown more on themselves, on their own resources, and find how much they miss their homes and the many little attentions they have received there, and they learn in this experience of detachment from them to appreciate their homes the more.

You have spare time usually in army life, especially now that active war is over, to think. And you think seriously on many things no doubt about which you have not thought in the same way before, say about mother and father and brothers and sisters, or wife and children. Through a perspective changed by circumstances they appear to your mind in a new light. You realise how much they have been to you, how much they have done for you, as you have never realised before. And no doubt you feel that you might have appreciated them more than you had done. If you feel that way, I am sure you look forward to your return home with eagerness. Never before has home been so much "sweet home" now you are away from it; and probably you resolve in your heart that as soon as you go back you will do all you can to make it sweeter still to those who are in it.

Be sure, your absence makes a great difference to the home-folks. They miss you. Whatever your faults,—and none of us are free from them—they think of your good qualities now more than ever they have thought of them. They appreciate your good points more highly, and look forward with longing for your return. You wish to be worthy of their affection, and when you present yourself at the welcome home it will be no doubt with a resolve to return not less pure and honourable but all the more kind and loving and helpful through your long absence from them. May the Lord God our heavenly father watch between you and them while you are absent from each other and bless you even more abundantly in your life together! ED.

National Unitarian Temperance Association.

TEMPERANCE TEACHING IN SUNDAY SCHOOLS. GUILDS, Etc.

Under the above heading, last month, the question of Temperance Teaching was introduced in the hope that further correspondence would result from many of the leaders and workers in our Churches Mr. Cowlin, the able hon. secretary of the National Unitarian Temperance Association contributes the following letter, which though not dealing with the question in regard to Sunday Schools, nevertheless is a valuable contribution to the subject, as it deals with scientific and methodical teaching of Temperance. Indirectly it approves of my suggestion last month under paragraph (2) whilst it is an extension of it to Day Schools. R.N.

Dear Sir,—The great success attending the Temperance movement in America, Canada, etc., is largely due to the teaching given in the schools. What are our schools doing In 1904 nearly fifteen thousand medical men petitioned the Board of Education in favour of temperance teaching in the schools and pointed out how much of the degeneracy, disease and accident with which they had to deal was directly or indirectly due to the use of alcohol, and that a widespread ignorance prevailed concerning the effects of this substance on body and mind. Five years later the Board of Education issued a "Syllabus of Lessons on Temperance" but very little advantage has been taken of it. The Board have been approached from time to time and say they can do no more, and that it now rests with the local authorities to take the necessary action.

We are all agreed that our young people should not be allowed to grow up ignorant of the facts about hygiene and temperance and it is, therefore, incumbent upon us to see that the necessary teaching shall be given. May we appeal most urgently to all able to help to use their influence with Education Authorities, school managers and teachers until our schools compare more favourably, in this respect, with those of other lands.

For a long time past very good work has been done by a number of temperance societies, up and down the country, who have, at their own cost, sent lecturers to the schools. Many teachers have been present, have heard the subject dealt with by experts, and are, doubtless, ready to start teaching with the help of the Board of Education syllabus. Let us press for the subject to be placed on the cirriculum of every school.

We shall be glad to send a copy of the syllabus to anyone interested. Please apply direct to Mr. Cowlin, 19, Northwood-road, S.E.23.—Yours faithfully The Committee.

E. F. COWLIN, Hon. Sec.

The Power of Little Things.

ON a certain day in Madras the air was clear and he sky bright. There was no cloud. Not a breeze irred the topmost frondage of the palms.

Mr. Pogson, the astronomer, in a contented frame f mind, paced the room in the cupola of the obser-atory. But suddenly his eyes happened to turn ward the barometer. The mercury was rapidly alling! Five minutes more, and it was falling with errible rapidity! A cyclone was evidently sweeping own on Madras. Mr. Pogson rushed to the wire hich connected his observatory with the master-ttendant's office facing the roadstead. "Cut or slip" as the astonishing order! For six hours afterwards he utmost consternation had prevailed, and more han twenty ships had suddenly rushed off to sea.

Then Mr. Pogson discovered that one of his chil-tren had pricked the bulb of his barometer with a in.

"ONE little grain in the sandy bars;
One little flower in the field of flowers,
One little star in the heaven of stars;
One little hour in a year of hours—
What if it makes or what if it mars?

"But the bar is built of the little grains;
And the little flowers make the meadows gay;
And the little stars light the heavenly plains,
And the little hours of each little day
Give to us all that life contains."

H.

Christ actually was what he supposed himself to be—not God, for he never made the slightest pretensions to that character, and would probably have thought such a pretension as blasphemous as it seemed to the men who condemned him,—but a man charged with a special, express and unique commission from God to lead mankind to truth and virtue. But about the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality, combined with a profundity of insight, which must place the prophet of Nazareth. . .in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast.

—John Stuart Mill.

Believe—that in all ages
Every human heart is human,
That in even savage bosoms
There are longings, yearnings, strivings,
For the good they comprehend not,
That the feeble hands and helpless,
Groping blindly in the darkness,
Touch God's right hand in the darkness,
And are lifted up and strengthened.

—Longfellow.

Post Card Propaganda.

What is Unitarianism?

UNITARIANS UNITE in the love of truth, in the spirit of Jesus Christ, for the worship of God and the service of man.

Unitarianism stands for belief in:

(1) THE UNITY OF GOD in ONE Person, the Universal Father, who is the sole Creator, and the only object of divine worship—and therefore not a Trinity.

(2) THE UNITY of MAN, all men being members one of another, dependent on each other, in each other's keeping, made to be ONE HUMANITY, and designed for universal brotherhood.

(3) THE UNITY OF MAN WITH GOD in one divine nature, man being the child of God, a partaker of the divine spirit, made to become perfect as God is perfect, and is essentially good and not naturally evil.

(4) THE UNITY OF LIFE here and hereafter, in one continued discipline, education and progress upward and onward for ever, man being immortal as God is immortal, and destined for the perfect life.

(5) THE UNITY OF SALVATION in one grand destiny for all men, by character and conduct. God's love ultimately winning all souls into complete fellowship with himself, so that not one shall be lost.

(6) THE UNITY OF TRUTH: UNITARIANISM is based upon the exercise of reason and the free search after truth; it is not under bondage to any fixed creed, is always open to receive new light and to adjust its statements of doctrine to accord therewith; for all Truth is one.

(7) THE UNITY OF RELIGION in one religion of every nation under many forms of faith,—the seeking after God's Kingdom and His righteousness in all human affairs.

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ALL COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE UNITARIAN MONTHLY TO Rev. H. BODELL SMITH, MOTTRAM, MANCHESTER.